



State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

March 19, 2009

Theresa Lantz, Commissioner
Department of Corrections
24 Wolcott Hill Road
Wethersfield, CT 06109

Dear Commissioner Lantz,

It has come to our attention, repeatedly over the past few months, that inmates at Northern Correctional Facility are taking apart metal lockers – which are located in each individual cell – and making knives and shanks out of the metal material. We understand that the Department of Correction is aware of this issue and has been trying to address the situation. Yet, most recently, on Monday of this week, two inmates allegedly attacked another inmate and stabbed that individual repeatedly with handmade weapons made from locker material.

We request that the Department provide to us a confidential briefing in regard to the incidents as we are very concerned. Additionally, we request that the Department remove the metal lockers from inmate cells as soon as possible as a needed precautionary measure. The existence of these lockers, in their current state, presents a significant health and safety hazard to the correctional staff who work at this facility. The staff at Northern are at risk of being fatally or seriously injured if an inmate is able make a weapon out of the metal material from these lockers.

It will be beneficial to receive this information prior to the March 24 public hearing of the Judiciary Committee at which proposed legislation concerning issues addressing correctional officer safety will be discussed. We anticipate the topic of these metal lockers to come up for discussion at that hearing.

We thank you for your consideration. It is our desire to work cooperatively to ensure the health and safety of the individuals who work within Connecticut's correctional facilities.

Sincerely,

A stylized, cursive signature of Rep. Michael Lawlor.

Rep. Michael Lawlor

A stylized, cursive signature of Rep. Kathleen Talarita.

Rep. Kathleen Talarita

A stylized, cursive signature of Rep. Karen Jarmoc.

Rep. Karen Jarmoc